

James Monroe to Andrew Jackson, September 27, 1814, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

SECRETARY MONROE TO JACKSON.

War Department, September 27, 1814.

Sir, I have had the honor to receive your letter of August 10th by Mr. Cassida and subsequent letters of August 23d, 24th, 25th, and 27th by mail.

By these communications which are strongly supported by others from various quarters there is great cause to believe that the Enemy have set on foot an expedition against Louisiana, thro' the Mobile in the expectation that while so strong a pressure was made from Canada and in this quarter, whereby the force of the Country and attention of the Government would be much engrossed, a favorable opportunity would be afforded them to take possession of the lower parts of that state, and of all the Country along the Mobile. In this as in all their other disorganizing and visionary projects they will be defeated by the virtue and gallantry of our people. The European Governments reasoning from examples of their own are always led into false conclusions of the consequences to be expected from attacks on our Union, and the distress of our citizens. this War will give them useful lessons in every quarter of the united states where the experiment may be made.

By your last letters, it seems probable that a considerable British force had been landed at Pensacola, with the connivance of the spanish authorities there, and at Havanna, and by other intellegence it may be presumed that a pressure or at least menace will be made, on the Western side of the Mississippi, by Nacogdoches and Natchitoches which latter will probably be by spanish Troops and for the purpose of menace only.

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You have had at your command all the regular force in the District with the detailed Militia in Louisiana, the Mississippi Territory and Tennessee, and you have also had authority to engage on our side the Warriors of the chocktaw chickesaw and creek nations or so many of them as you might think proper to employ having it in view at the same time to secure the affection and neutrality of all the members of those tribes. It is known that the regular troops are distributed into many posts and that the militia of Louisiana will be less efficient for general purposes from the dread of domestic insurrection so that on the militia of Tennessee your principal reliance must be.

The President taking all circumstances into consideration has thought proper to order five thousand additional troops from Tennessee to march to your aid as soon as possible by the most direct and convenient routes unless before they set out on their march they shall receive countermanding orders from you. He has likewise requested the Governor of Georgia to hold in readiness subject to your order twenty five hundred men on the presumption that a cooperating force from that quarter may possibly be necessary. I send you a copy of my letter to the Governor of Tennessee to whom you will hasten to communicate your views and wishes, full confidence is entertained in your judgment in the discharge of this discretionary power vested in you.¹ Measures are taken for procuring in the neighbouring towns and forwarding to your orders blankets and some other presents for the creeks chocktaws and other friendly Indians. These will be sent by waggons direct to [*blank*].

¹ Monroe's letter to Blount, dated Sept. 25, 1814, is as follows:

“ *Sir*, Intelligence has been received that the Enemy contemplate an expedition against the state of Louisiana, thro' the mobile, with intention to occupy all the Country from cape Florida to the provinces of spain westward of the Mississippi. the disolating spirit with which the British Government now wages War against the United States looking to conquest and subjugation with the enlarged means which their successes on the continent have given them, entitle this intelligence to full credit; indeed recent accounts state that

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they have landed a considerable force at Pensacola which if true leaves no doubt of the object.

“should the enemy take possession of Louisiana I need not describe to you its pernicious effect, not on the interests of that growing state only, but of all that portion of the united states lying westward of the Alleghany mountains. Its whole commerce would be in the hands of an inveterate foe. It is therefore indispensably necessary to repel this invasion at once and for that purpose to put forward an adequate force to meet it.

“On full consideration of this important subject the President desires that you will immediately detach five thousand troops of your state in addition to those already detailed which it is presumed have been called for by General Jackson and that you will hasten them to him by such routes as with the intelligence you may possess may appear best calculated to afford the necessary aid in repelling the expected invasion. As soon as you receive this letter I have to request that you will transmit a copy of it to Genl Jackson informing him of the time the troops called for will begin their march and of the routes they intend taking that he may give any advice which appears to him to be proper on either point.

“It may happen that the force already under his command and called for by him may be adequate to the object or that he may wish this additional force to proceed in some other direction than that contemplated. If so, by giving him prompt notice of what is intended he may advise you of the actual danger and of the necessity there may be of the aid intended for him. Viewing the danger of the crises and its possible consequences to so vast and important a portion of our Union, in the light in which I have placed it, the President has considered it his duty to take this measure to arrest it, aware that too prompt and effectual a remedy cannot be afforded should the intelligence received be well founded. It is proper however in taking this step, to guard against the unnecessary exposure of our citizens and unnecessary expcnce, should General Jackson on a nearer view and more correct knowledge of the actual state of things, think the force already under his

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command adequate to the defence of the Country against any force the Enemy may bring against him. For the Arming, equipping and supplying of these troops we must rely in the first instance on the local resources and the Arrangements of your Excellency. The staff which have heretofore been employed for the Tennessee Militia are probably well qualified for this expedition.

“Herewith enclosed you will receive copies of the contracts for supplying rations and I must request your Excellency to make such further arrangements as may be found necessary. It is impossible at this time to furnish the funds for this object. The proper Agents must be authorised to draw on this Department at sixty and ninety days untill money can be remitted to meet the expenditures. I have the honor to be

“P. S. To guard against any misconception of the views of the President, I wish it to be distinctly understood that the march of these 5000 men is not to be delayed till you hear from Genl. Jackson, but is to commence without a moments delay, after the receipt of this letter.”

Apprehending much difficulty in the prosecution of your campaign which it may not be in your power to remove without money I have transmitted to Governor Blount One hundred thousand Dollars in Treasury notes to be applied to the necessary expences of the campaign, in discharging Indian claims and supplying their wants, an object to be attended to at the present time equally from motives of policy and humanity. You will therefore draw on him for the necessary funds. Of these expenditures you will keep a regular account. Should it be found more convenient you are authorised to draw on this Department, for such necessary expenditures at sixty or thirty days sight.

I have the honor to be